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Financing of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali

Financing arrangements for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2013

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the note by the Secretary-General on the financing arrangements for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2013 (A/67/863). During its consideration of the financing of MINUSMA, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 22 May 2013.

Background

2. By its resolution 2100 (2013) of 25 April 2013, the Security Council established MINUSMA, which is to subsume the United Nations Office in Mali and assume responsibility, from 25 April 2013, for the discharge of the tasks of the Office mandated under Security Council resolution 2085 (2012). The Council also decided that authority would be transferred from the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) to MINUSMA on 1 July 2013, at which point MINUSMA would commence the implementation of the following mandate for an initial period of 12 months: (a) the stabilization of key population centres and the re-establishment of State authority throughout the country; (b) support for the implementation of the transitional road map, including the national political dialogue and the electoral process; (c) the protection of civilians and United Nations personnel; (d) the promotion and protection of human rights; (e) support for humanitarian assistance; (f) support for cultural preservation; and (g) support for national and international justice. The Council further decided that MINUSMA would comprise up to 11,200 military personnel and 1,440 police personnel (see A/67/863, paras. 3-8).

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3. The Advisory Committee recalls that, pursuant to paragraphs 8 and 9 of section VI of General Assembly resolution 64/269, it previously concurred with the request for authorization to enter into commitments in an amount not to exceed $83,690,200 gross ($82,920,900 net) for the period from 25 April to 30 June 2013 to meet critical logistical and personnel requirements related to the establishment of MINUSMA.

Overall resourcing proposal and planning assumptions

4. In order to implement the mandate of MINUSMA, the Secretary-General requests commitment authority, with assessment for the period from 25 April to 31 December 2013 in the amount of $454,426,300, inclusive of the $83,690,200 previously authorized by the Advisory Committee. The current proposal comprises military and police personnel requirements of $133,860,400 (representing 36 per cent), civilian personnel requirements of $47,702,600 (representing 13 per cent) and estimated operational costs of $189,173,100 (representing 51 per cent) (see A/67/863, paras. 17-20).

5. Paragraphs 11 and 12 of the note by the Secretary-General state that the Mission's support concept is based on the principles of the global field support strategy and includes the extensive use of contractors, troops and Member States for service delivery, a light support structure focused on contracts management, and the co-location of civilian, military and police personnel, to be deployed in a phased manner, in modularized camps. It is also stated that administrative support functions and assistance with logistical support will be provided in coordination with other missions, including the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire and the United Nations Global Service Centre in Brindisi, Italy.

6. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed of the expected accomplishments of the Mission through 31 December 2013. The Mission is not expected to reach full operating capacity or staffing by the end of the year. The start-up will be conducted in parallel with the immediate discharge of tasks mandated in Security Council resolution 2085 (2012), which include political support and reconciliation; negotiations around Kidal and United Nations operations; human rights monitoring and reporting across the country; planning for the transition of AFISMA; and support to MINUSMA uniformed personnel from the date of transfer of authority. To facilitate a smooth transition, MINUSMA will also provide advice to AFISMA and continue discussions on the Status of Forces Agreement with Malian authorities. The Committee was further informed that from 1 July, MINUSMA will commence implementation of its tasks under Security Council resolution 2100 (2013), which will include support to the extension of State authority; security sector reform; mine action; human rights monitoring and investigation; and support to the presidential elections. The Mission will also focus on establishing the required operational infrastructure in Bamako, Gao, Timbuktu and, subsequently, Kidal.

Military, police and civilian personnel

7. The resourcing proposal includes requirements to deploy 10,309 military and police personnel, comprising 9,141 military contingent personnel, 206 United Nations police and 962 formed police personnel, by 31 December 2013. It is expected that the majority of the current AFISMA troops and police will be rehatted

with the transfer of authority from AFISMA to MINUSMA, scheduled for 1 July 2013 (see A/67/863, paras. 18 and 23).

8. The proposal also includes requirements to recruit 1,312 civilians by 31 December 2013, including 23 positions at United Nations Headquarters to provide support and oversight for the Mission. The proposed civilian staffing requirements for both the Mission and Headquarters comprise 415 international staff, 647 national staff and 250 United Nations Volunteers, with a forecasted average incumbency of 940 civilians for the period. Regarding the positions requested for Headquarters, the note by the Secretary-General indicates that dedicated resources are required to augment teams in the Office of Operations (integrated operations team), the Office of Military Affairs and the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as well as the logistics, personnel, finance and budget, and information and communications technology functions of the Department of Field Support and the Department of Management. It is also proposed that a dedicated planning capacity for MINUSMA be established within the Department of Field Support. The Secretary-General states that efforts have been made to absorb additional functions within the existing staffing but that the significant size of the Mission would give rise to immediate demands beyond the capacity of the existing levels of the resources of those departments at Headquarters (see A/67/863, paras. 13, 25 and 32).

9. Upon enquiry as to the justification for the 23 positions requested for Headquarters, the Advisory Committee was informed that MINUSMA is currently supported by all relevant areas in the Departments of Field Support, Management and Peacekeeping Operations, and that this approach cannot be sustained without an impact on support to other missions. The Committee was further informed that given the funding cycle MINUSMA is operating under, the support account is not readily accessible to support these surge requirements. It was stated that these positions will be reviewed in the context of the 2014/15 support account budget, with an expectation that the number of positions requested on an ongoing basis will be significantly lower than the 23 positions requested in the present commitment authority.

10. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that a request for commitment authority is not the appropriate mechanism by which to request positions at Headquarters for the support of peacekeeping operations and that it risks undermining the purpose and functioning of the support account mechanism itself. A request for such positions ought to be reflected within the support account proposal. The Committee considers that the Secretary-General could have submitted an addendum to the support account proposal in parallel to the present request for commitment authority for MINUSMA.**

11. **Furthermore, the Advisory Committee recalls that the Secretary-General recently justified maintaining the existing backstopping capacity within the support account, despite the closure of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), in order to provide for rapid deployment to additional post-conflict environments (see A/67/756, para. 10). Given this rationale of maintaining resource levels within the support account to address the needs of additional post-conflict environments that may arise, and considering that there would be some additional available capacity within Headquarters resulting from the closure of UNMIT, the Committee questions whether the 23 requested positions are necessary.**

12. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed of the historical trend of the number of support account posts and positions vis-à-vis the number of peacekeeping missions. The data indicate that while the number of missions from the 2003/04 period to the 2013/14 period has not fluctuated significantly, ranging from 15 to 18 missions, the number of approved support account posts and positions has increased steadily, from an approved 743 posts/positions in the 2003/04 period to a projected 1,403 posts/positions in the 2013/14 period. In this regard, the Committee recalls its comments on the upward trend of the resource level of the peacekeeping support account, and a review by the Secretary-General of the relationship between the level of backstopping capacity provided through the support account and the overall scale of peacekeeping operation activities (see A/67/848, paras. 10 and 11).

Operational costs

13. Within operational costs, the proposal includes the first phase of construction of the Mission headquarters, a logistics base, three regional offices, 13 team sites, 12 military camps to accommodate uniformed personnel and airfield improvements at each of the three regional offices (see A/67/863, para. 15). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed of the detailed cost estimates of the requested financial resources, including the amount of $57,009,500 for facilities and infrastructure. **Taking into account the large number of construction projects to be implemented by 31 December 2013, the Committee considers the current construction proposal for the period to be unrealistic and questions whether it is achievable in the time frame. The Committee therefore encourages the Secretary-General to review the proposed construction programme and to submit a more realistic and achievable construction plan in the forthcoming proposed budget for MINUSMA.**

14. The proposal also provides for the procurement of the first phase of required equipment, including the acquisition of 590 vehicles, 28 generators and 965 computing devices, and the phased deployment of 23 fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft (see A/67/863, para. 16).

Expenditure pattern of commitment authority

15. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed of the current expenditure pattern of the previously authorized commitment authority in the amount of $83,690,200. Approximate expenditures to date amount to $0.9 million and immediate projected expenditures over the coming weeks would amount to approximately $20.1 million. **The Committee notes the low expenditure pattern of the previously approved commitment authority.**

Conclusion

16. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the financing of MINUSMA are contained in paragraph 33 of the note by the Secretary-General (A/67/863). **Taking into consideration the immediate need for resources for the establishment of MINUSMA, the Advisory Committee recommends that the Assembly authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for the period from 25 April to 31 December 2013 in the amount of $454,426,300, inclusive of the amount of $83,690,200 previously authorized by the Committee for the period from 25 April to 30 June 2013. However, in the light of its**

observations in paragraphs 10, 11, 13 and 15 above, the Committee recommends a 10 per cent reduction in the assessment of the commitment authority for the period from 25 April to 31 December 2013. The Committee stresses that its recommendation on commitment authority is without prejudice to any position the Committee may take on the proposed structure, number and level of posts or on other proposed resources for MINUSMA in the context of its budget submissions.